

CLAIMS

I claim:

- [c1] 1. A method in a computer system for providing information related to materials for manufacturing parts and assemblies, the method comprising:
- receiving a first request for a first display page from a first computer;
 - in response to the received first request, providing the first display page to the first computer, the first display page being configured to receive information related to first and second materials, the second material being substitutable for the first material;
 - receiving the information related to first and second materials from the first computer;
 - storing the received information;
 - receiving a second request for a second display page from a second computer; and
 - in response to the received second request,
 - retrieving at least a portion of the stored information;
 - generating the second display page, the second display page containing at least a portion of the retrieved information; and
 - providing the second display page to the second computer.
- [c2] 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the first computer is located in a first country and the second computer is located in a second country.
- [c3] 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying a first specification associated with the first material and a second specification identifier identifying a second specification associated with the second material.

[c4] 4. The method of claim 3 wherein the second display page contains the first specification identifier and the second specification identifier.

[c5] 5. The method of claim 4 wherein the second display page contains a material name and a material form, the material name and the material form being associated with the first material.

[c6] 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the second display page contains a first specification identifier identifying a first specification associated with the first material and a second specification identifier identifying a second specification associated with the second material, wherein the first specification identifier is associated with a first geographical region and the second specification identifier is associated with a second geographical region.

[c7] 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the first geographical region is the U.S.A. and the second geographical region is Asia.

[c8] 8. The method of claim 6 wherein the first geographical region is the U.S.A. and the second geographical region is Europe.

[c9] 9. The method of claim 1 wherein the second display page contains a first specification identifier identifying a first specification associated with the first material and a second specification identifier identifying a second specification associated with the second material, wherein the first specification identifier is associated with a first country and the second specification identifier is associated with a second country.

[c10] 10. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
receiving a third request for a third display page from the second computer;
and

in response to the received third request,
retrieving a material specification, the material specification relating
to the second material;
generating the third display page, the third display page containing
at least a portion of the retrieved material specification; and
providing the third display page to the second computer.

[c11] 11. The method of claim 10 wherein the received information is stored in a first database and the at least a portion of the stored information is retrieved from the first database, and wherein the material specification is retrieved from a second database, the second database being different than the first database.

[c12] 12. The method of claim 10 wherein the first computer is located in a first country and the second and third computers are located in a second country.

[c13] 13. The method of claim 10 wherein:
the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying a first specification associated with the first material and a second specification identifier identifying a second specification associated with the second material;
the second display page contains the first specification identifier and the second specification identifier; and
the third display page contains at least a portion of the second specification.

[c14] 14. The method of claim 13 wherein the second display page contains a material name and a material form, the material name and the material form being associated with the first material.

[c15] 15. The method of claim 10 wherein the second display page contains a first specification identifier identifying a first specification associated with the first material and a second specification identifier identifying a second specification associated with the second material, wherein the first specification identifier is associated with a first geographical region and the second specification identifier is associated with a second geographical region.

[c16] 16. The method of claim 15 wherein the first geographical region is the U.S.A. and the second geographical region is Asia.

[c17] 17. The method of claim 15 wherein the first geographical region is the U.S.A. and the second geographical region is Europe.

[c18] 18. A method in a computer system for providing information related to specifications usable in connection with manufacturing, the method comprising:

- receiving a first request for a first display page from a first computer;
- in response to the received first request, providing the first display page to the first computer, the first display page being configured to receive information related to first and second specifications, the second specification superseding the first specification;
- receiving the information related to the first and second specifications from the first computer;
- storing the received information;
- receiving a second request for a second display page from a second computer; and
- in response to the received second request,
 - retrieving at least a portion of the stored information;
 - generating the second display page, the second display page containing at least a portion of the retrieved information; and
 - providing the second display page to the second computer.

[c19] 19. The method of claim 18 wherein the first computer is located in a first country and the second computer is located in a second country.

[c20] 20. The method of claim 18 wherein the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first specification and a second specification identifier identifying the second specification.

[c21] 21. The method of claim 18 wherein:
the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first specification and a second specification identifier identifying the second specification; and
the second display page contains the first specification identifier and the second specification identifier.

[c22] 22. The method of claim 21 wherein the second display page contains a date, the date defining when the first specification becomes inactive and the second specification becomes active.

[c23] 23. The method of claim 18 wherein the second display page contains a first specification identifier identifying the first specification and a second specification identifier identifying the second specification, wherein the first specification identifier is associated with a first geographical region and the second specification identifier is associated with a second geographical region.

[c24] 24. The method of claim 18 further comprising:
receiving a third request for a third display page from the second computer;
and
in response to the received third request,
retrieving at least a portion of the second specification;

generating the third display page, the third display page containing
at least a portion of the retrieved second specification; and
providing the third display page to the second computer.

[c25] 25. The method of claim 24 wherein the received information is stored in a first database and the at least a portion of the stored information is retrieved from the first database, and wherein the at least a portion of the second specification is retrieved from a second database.

[c26] 26. The method of claim 24 wherein the first computer is located in a first country and the second and third computers are located in a second country.

[c27] 27. The method of claim 24 wherein:
the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first specification and a second specification identifier identifying a second specification; and
the second display page contains the first specification identifier and the second specification identifier.

[c28] 28. The method of claim 24 wherein the second display page contains a first specification identifier identifying the first specification and a second specification identifier identifying the second specification, wherein the first specification identifier is associated with a first geographical region and the second specification identifier is associated with a second geographical region.

[c29] 29. A method in a computer system for providing information related to domestic specifications usable in connection with parts and assemblies provided by a foreign supplier for a domestic company, the method comprising:
receiving a first request for a first display page from a first computer, the first computer being associated with the domestic company;

in response to the received first request, providing the first display page to the first computer, the first display page being configured to receive information related to a first material specification or a first process specification;

receiving the information related to the first material specification or the first process specification from the first user computer;

storing the received information in a database;

receiving a second request for a second display page from a second computer, the second computer being associated with the foreign supplier; and

in response to the received second request,

retrieving at least a portion of the stored information from the database;

generating the second display page, the second display page containing at least a portion of the stored information; and

providing the second display page to the second computer.

[c30] 30. The method of claim 29 wherein the first display page is configured to receive information related to the first material specification, wherein the first material specification is associated with a first material, and wherein the received information includes information related to a second material specification, the second material specification being associated with a second material that is substitutable for the first material.

[c31] 31. The method of claim 29 wherein the first display page is configured to receive information related to the first material specification, and wherein the received information includes information related to a second material specification, the second material specification superseding the first material specification.

[c32] 32. The method of claim 29 wherein the first display page is configured to receive information related to the first process specification, and wherein the received information includes information related to a second process specification, the second process specification superseding the first process specification.

[c33] 33. The method of claim 29 wherein the first computer is located in a first country and the second computer is located in a second country.

[c34] 34. The method of claim 29 wherein the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first material specification and a second specification identifier identifying a second material specification, the first material specification being associated with a first material and the second material specification being associated with a second material that is substitutable for the first material.

[c35] 35. The method of claim 29 wherein:
the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first material specification and a second specification identifier identifying a second material specification, the first material specification being associated with a first material and the second material specification being associated with a second material that is substitutable for the first material; and
the second display page contains the first specification identifier and the second specification identifier.

[c36] 36. The method of claim 29 wherein the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first process specification and a second specification identifier identifying a second process specification, the second process specification superseding the first process specification.

[c37] 37. The method of claim 29 wherein:
the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first process specification and a second specification identifier identifying a second process specification, the second process specification superseding the first process specification;
and
the second display page contains the first specification identifier and the second specification identifier.

[c38] 38. A method in a computer system for obtaining information related to a specification usable in connection with manufacturing from a server computer, the method comprising:
requesting a first display page from the server computer;
in response to the request, receiving the first display page from the server computer, the first display page being configured to receive at least one specification identifier;
receiving from a user a first specification identifier, the first specification identifier identifying a first specification;
sending the first specification identifier to the server computer;
in response to sending the first specification identifier, receiving a second display page from the server computer, the second display page containing a second specification identifier, the second specification identifier identifying a second specification that relates to the first specification.

[c39] 39. The method of claim 38 wherein the first specification is associated with a first material and the second specification is associated with a second material that is substitutable for the first material.

[c40] 40. The method of claim 38 wherein the first specification is associated with a first geographical region and the second specification is associated with a second geographical region.

[c41] 41. The method of claim 40 wherein the first geographical region is the U.S.A. and the second geographical region is Asia.

[c42] 42. The method of claim 40 wherein the first geographical region is the U.S.A. and the second geographical region is Europe.

[c43] 43. The method of claim 38 wherein the second specification supersedes the first specification.

[c44] 44. The method of claim 43 wherein the first and second specifications are process specifications.

[c45] 45. A computer system for providing information related to domestic specifications usable in connection with parts and assemblies provided by a foreign supplier for a domestic company, the computer system comprising:

means for receiving a first request for a first display page from a first computer, the first computer being associated with the domestic company;

means for providing the first display page to the first computer in response to the received first request, the first display page being configured to receive information related to a first material specification or a first process specification;

means for receiving the information related to the first material specification or the first process specification from the first user computer;

means for storing the received information in a database;

means for receiving a second request for a second display page from a second computer, the second computer being associated with the foreign supplier;

means for retrieving at least a portion of the stored information from the database in response to the received second request;

means for generating the second display page in response to the received second request, the second display page containing at least a portion of the stored information; and

means for providing the second display page to the second computer in response to the received second request.

[c46] 46. The computer system of claim 45 wherein the first display page is configured to receive information related to the first material specification, wherein the first material specification is associated with a first material, and wherein the received information includes information related to a second material specification, the second material specification being associated with a second material that is substitutable for the first material.

[c47] 47. The computer system of claim 45 wherein the first display page is configured to receive information related to the first material specification, and wherein the received information includes information related to a second material specification, the second material specification superseding the first material specification.

[c48] 48. The computer system of claim 45 wherein the first display page is configured to receive information related to the first process specification, and wherein the received information includes information related to a second process specification, the second process specification superseding the first process specification.

[c49] 49. The computer system of claim 45 wherein the first computer is located in a first country and the second computer is located in a second country.

[c50] 50. The computer system of claim 45 wherein the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first material specification and a second specification identifier identifying a second material specification, the first material specification being associated with a first material and the second material specification being associated with a second material that is substitutable for the first material.

[c51] 51. The computer system of claim 45 wherein:
the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first material specification and a second specification identifier identifying a second material specification, the first material specification being associated with a first material and the second material specification being associated with a second material that is substitutable for the first material; and
the second display page contains the first specification identifier and the second specification identifier.

[c52] 52. The computer system of claim 45 wherein the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first process specification and a second specification identifier identifying a second process specification, the second process specification superseding the first process specification.

[c53] 53. The computer system of claim 45 wherein:
the first display page is configured to receive a first specification identifier identifying the first process specification and a second specification identifier identifying a second process specification, the second

process specification superseding the first process specification;
and

the second display page contains the first specification identifier and the
second specification identifier.

[c54] 54. A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a computer system to provide information related to a specification usable in connection with manufacturing, the information being provided by a method comprising:

receiving a first request for a first display page from a first computer;

in response to the received first request, providing the first display page to the first computer, the first display page being configured to receive information related to a first material specification or a first process specification;

receiving the information related to the first material specification or the first process specification from the first user computer;

storing the received information in a database;

receiving a second request for a second display page from a second computer; and

in response to the received second request,

retrieving at least a portion of the stored information from the database;

generating the second display page, the second display page containing at least a portion of the stored information; and

providing the second display page to the second computer.

[c55] 55. The computer-readable medium of claim 54 wherein the first display page is configured to receive information related to the first material specification, wherein the first material specification is associated with a first material, and wherein the received information includes information related to a second material

specification, the second material specification being associated with a second material that is substitutable for the first material.

[c56] 56. The computer-readable medium of claim 54 wherein the first display page is configured to receive information related to the first material specification, and wherein the received information includes information related to a second material specification, the second material specification superseding the first material specification.

[c57] 57. The computer-readable medium of claim 54 wherein the first display page is configured to receive information related to the first process specification, and wherein the received information includes information related to a second process specification, the second process specification superseding the first process specification.

[c58] 58. The computer-readable medium of claim 54 wherein the first computer is located in a first country and the second computer is located in a second country.

[c59] 59. A computer-readable medium containing a display page configured to provide information related to a material substitution, the display page comprising:

- a material specification identifier field for identifying a first material specification associated with a first material; and
- a material information portion, the material information portion providing information related to the first material including a second material specification, the second material specification associated with a second material, the second material being substitutable for the first material.

[c60] 60. The computer-readable medium of claim 59 wherein the material information portion further includes:

- a form of the first material; and
- a common name associated with the first material.

[c61] 61. The computer-readable medium of claim 59 wherein the material information portion further includes:

- a form of the first material;
- a common name associated with the first material; and
- a third material specification, the third material specification associated with a third material, the third material being substitutable for the first material.

[c62] 62. The computer-readable medium of claim 59 wherein the first material specification is associated with a first geographical region and the second material specification is associated with a second geographical region.

[c63] 63. The computer-readable medium of claim 62 wherein the first material specification is associated with the U.S.A. and the second material specification is associated with Asia.

[c64] 64. The computer-readable medium of claim 59 wherein the material information portion further includes a third material specification, the third material specification associated with a third material, the third material being substitutable for the first material, wherein the first material specification is associated with a first geographical region, the second material specification is associated with a second geographical region, and the third material specification is associated with a third geographical region.

[c65] 65. The computer-readable medium of claim 64 wherein the first geographical region is the U.S.A., the second geographical region is Asia, and the third geographical region is Europe.

[c66] 66. A computer-readable medium containing a display page configured to provide information related to a specification, the display page comprising:
a specification identifier field for identifying a first specification; and
a specification information portion, the specification information portion providing information related to the first specification including:
an indication of whether the first specification has been superseded;
and
when the first specification has been superseded, a second specification, the second specification superseding the first specification.

[c67] 67. The computer-readable medium of claim 66 further comprising:
when the first specification has been superseded, a date defining when the second specification superseded the first specification.

[c68] 68. The computer-readable medium of claim 66 wherein the first and second specifications are material specifications.

[c69] 69. A method for providing information related to a first material usable in connection with parts and assemblies provided by a supplier for a company, the method comprising:
receiving from the company an indication of a second material that is substitutable for the first material;
storing a mapping between the first material and the second material;

receiving from the supplier a request for information relating to the first material;

in response to receiving the request,

retrieving the stored mapping between the first and second materials; and

providing an indication that the second material is substitutable for the first material.

[c70] 70. The method of claim 69 when the second material is associated with a country and wherein the second material is substitutable for the first material only when the supplier is located in the country.

[c71] 71. The method of claim 69 further comprising receiving an indication of multiple materials that are substitutable for the first material, each of the substitutable materials being associated with a country.

[c72] 72. The method of claim 71 further comprising:
determining a country associated with the supplier; and
filtering the substitutable materials based on the country associated with the supplier.

[c73] 73. A method for providing information related to a first specification usable in connection with parts and assemblies provided by a supplier for a company, the method comprising:

receiving from the company an indication of a second specification that supersedes the first specification;

storing a mapping between the first specification and the second specification;

receiving from the supplier a request for information relating to the first specification;

in response to receiving the request,

retrieving the stored mapping between the first and second specifications; and

providing an indication that the second specification is substitutable for the first specification.

[c74] 74. The method of claim 73 when the second specification is associated with a country and wherein the second specification supersedes the first specification only when the supplier is located in the country.

[c75] 75. The method of claim 73 further comprising receiving an indication of multiple specifications that supersede the first specification, each of the superseding specifications being associated with a country.

[c76] 76. The method of claim 75 further comprising:
determining a country associated with the supplier; and
filtering the superseding specifications based on the country associated with the supplier.